

Both Dr. Robinson and Mr. Coville express their dislike for theoretical objections. But what other objections can be made to a theoretical rule? It must be remembered that the principle under discussion has never been put into practice by any botanist who is inclined to "lump" related genera. Such botanists have existed in the past, and are sure to arise in the near future, and should they ever write in accordance with this principle, the present theoretical objections will at once become actual and overwhelming ones, and the present supporters of this principle will wake up, rub their eyes, and wonder why their rules don't work. It is my claim that nomenclatural rules, to be permanent, should provide for all foreseen possibilities.

It may be claimed by some that the utter disregard of the right of priority of a binomial, as such, is a principle copied from the zoologists. If so (and I am not sufficiently acquainted with their usages either to deny or to affirm it) I feel constrained, as does Dr. Millspaugh in considering decapitalization, "to speak against the tendency of many botanists to follow a bad example set by zoologists."<sup>1</sup>

To sum up: it appears to me that the recognition of the *priority of binomials*, and, so long as it does not conflict with the former, of the *priority of specific names*, possesses all of the advantages, and none of the disadvantages, of the *rejection of revertible names*. It will thus be seen that I am a firm believer in priority law, only consistency requires me to recognize the right of priority for binomials; and further, I believe heartily in the rejection of homonyms, provided only the word "homonym" be taken in its proper sense. The suggestions here brought forward would settle the case of *Juncus megacephalus* and all other cases which Mr. Coville has presented, in the way in which he would like to see them settled, and at the same time would do away with Dr. Robinson's objections, as published in the August GAZETTE. I feel sure that the leaders of reform, with whom I am thoroughly in sympathy, will strengthen their cause by rejecting any weak principle, instead of clinging to it when it has been proven untenable.—JOHN HENDLEY BARNHART, *Tarrytown, N. Y.*

#### Decapitalization.

Opposed, as I am, to the spelling of names derived from persons without a capital letter, I should nevertheless like to ask Mr. C. F. Millspaugh a question or two. How can *nevadensis* ever mean *of the whiteness of snow*? Is there a Latin scholar in existence who would not understand that *bajaensis* means *coming from Baja*? Is it not the case that in nearly all languages, except English, the adjectival form of place names is written with a lower case initial, while only the substantival form is written with a capital? In short, should we not write *Scutella blaviensis*, but *Scutella Besanconi*, *Scutella calvimontana*, but *Scutella Morgani*? Mr. Millspaugh will observe that I write this entirely from the point of view of the classical scholar, and not from the point of view of the systematic biologist, who must, I fear, be left to his ineptitudes whether he be zoologist or botanist.—F. A. BATHER, *British Museum.*

<sup>1</sup> Bot. Gaz. 20: 429. 1895.